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27 July 1981

PROCEDURES FOR PRODUCTION OF
INTERAGENCY INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS

This Notice establishes new guidelines for production of interagency intelligence assessments, based on the experience to date of the National Intelligence Council (NIC), and on recent critiques of existing procedures.

Policy

National Intelligence Estimates (NIEs and SNIEs) are the most important product of the Intelligence Community and should be given the highest priority by all intelligence agencies. They will again become the primary Intelligence Community contribution to the policy formulation process at the national level. (Interagency Intelligence Memoranda will continue to be produced as before, on occasions when the paramount intelligence task is the reaching of factual determinations. See Page 5.)

The principal purpose of these changes

- To produce NIEs and SNIEs which are better suited than are existing estimates for NSC and Cabinet-level examination and consideration, while preserving their usefulness for other important consumers
- To assist senior policymakers by producing interagency assessments which are less bulky -- and to do so quicker.
- To improve the substantive usefulness of such assessments to the policy process.
- To enhance senior review within the Intelligence Community by engaging the DCI and the other NFIB principals more fully in arriving at the judgments set out in these assessments.

Categories of Estimates

Special National Intelligence Estimates will be oriented to a current event or policy issue. The need for such estimates will normally arise from the policy formulation process. To be useful, they must be brief and timely. Papers directed at relatively narrow questions and on particularly short deadlines will normally be produced as "Category A" SNIEs. This category includes "Contingency" estimates, e.g., "What would be the reaction if the US did X?" There will also be broader "Category B" SNIEs, particularly in the political and economic fields, that require expeditious handling. Production of SNIEs will be governed by the "fast track" procedures discussed below (page 2).

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National Intelligence Estimates will also fall in two Categories. "Category I" NIEs will be those devoted to less pressing policy concerns. e.g., Yugoslavia After Tito. Papers in this category will take somewhat longer to prepare than those tied to more immediate issues, and may include extensive back-up analysis. Production will be governed by more deliberate procedures (see page 3). The number of Category I NIEs should decrease in coming months as the number of SNIEs increases. The major periodic estimates, including the Soviet military series, will be listed as Category II NIEs. They will be produced on a schedule approved by the DCI after consultation with NFIB (see page 4).

Content of NIEs and SNIEs

In preparing estimates, Principals, Chairmen, and drafters shall assure that drafts:

- Are as directly relevant to ongoing policy concerns as possible, within the ground rules of appropriate discussion by intelligence officers. They should be written in awareness of the US role in the given situations, analyze the degree to which these situations may be susceptible to the influence of the US or its friends, and address the significance of various outcomes for US interests.
- Contain as much estimative thrust as possible, including where appropriate possible alternative future developments.
- Integrate political, military, economic and other factors--especially with respect to economic forces and to the broader political purposes of military power.
- Avoid secondary issues and unnecessary detail.
- Contain, as has been the practice, any alternative or dissenting views.
- Indicate the validity of the intelligence supporting the estimate.

Fast-Track Procedures for SNIEs

Initiation: Preparation of SNIEs may be proposed to the DCI by any senior officer, although the concerned NIO is expected to anticipate the need for such estimates through his participation in the policy formulation process. If the DCI approves a proposal, the Chairman NIC will immediately notify NFIB Principals by telephone or LDX, designating an NIO as Chairman of the estimate and requesting that each Principal name a single qualified officer fully empowered to represent him in the coordination process. Representatives should have access to and be able to speak for their Principal.

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Terms of Reference (TORs)/Concept Papers: The Estimate Chairman will immediately prepare draft TORs and a concept paper, check them out with the requester and the DCI, and coordinate them with the representatives by telephone and LDX. For Category A SNIEs, these steps should take no more than 24 hours, for Category B, no more than 3 days.

Drafting Responsibilities: The Chairman will in the course of establishing TORs negotiate with the representatives to identify drafters and contributors who are both qualified and available. It will be the responsibility of the Principals to free assigned drafters and contributors from conflicting duties until the draft is completed. For Category A this should regularly require no more than 2 days, for Category B, 5 days.

Format: The SNIE will regularly run no more than 5 pages for Category A and 10 for Category B. Where essential, annexes may be appended.

Coordination: When the Chairman has a satisfactory draft, he will distribute it to the representatives for coordination, normally by LDX. Representatives should immediately seek the views of their Principals. For Category A SNIEs, the Chairman will, when time permits, convene a representatives meeting to coordinate the paper, but in extreme cases will coordinate by telephone. In any case the time required should not be more than 2 days. For Category B, representatives will normally meet, and coordination should be complete in no more than 5 days.

NFIB Consideration: SNIEs will normally be reviewed by the DCI at this stage. Concurrence of the Principals in Category A SNIEs will then be obtained by telephone or through a special NFIB meeting within the next 24 hours. Category B SNIEs usually will be considered at a regular NFIB meeting if conveniently scheduled, or at a special meeting; no more than 3 days should be required.

Category I NIE Procedures

Initiation: NIEs in Category I will normally be proposed by the NIC and scheduled well in advance, although any NFIB Principal or senior policy officer may request one. The schedule will be considered by NFIB quarterly and approved by the DCI. Should an addition to or deletion from the schedule be proposed, Principals will be given an opportunity to comment prior to a decision by the DCI. Before work begins on a paper, the Chairman, NIC is responsible for designating an NIO as Chairman and notifying the Principals. Each Principal in turn will designate a single qualified officer fully empowered to represent him in preparation of the estimate.

Terms of Reference/Concept Paper: The Estimate Chairman will prepare draft TORs and a concept paper. He will assure that before they are sent out to the agency representatives, these papers have been checked out with the policy officers concerned and have been submitted to the DCI for his review. Once these papers go out to the representatives, the latter will be expected to review them with their Principals before the representatives come to the coordination meetings. The usual time to be given for such review, prior to the meetings of the representatives, will be one week. In cases where

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circumstances warrant significant changes in the initial purpose, scope, concept, or TORs of a given paper, the Chairman will ensure that these changes have the approval of the DCI and the NFIB Principals.

Drafting Responsibilities: The Chairman will, in the course of preparing and coordinating TORs, negotiate with the representatives to identify drafting officers and arrange for contributions from individual agencies. It will be the responsibility of each Principal to ensure that contributions assigned to his agency are delivered on schedule. Drafts should regularly be completed within one month.

Format: Each draft Category I NIE will normally consist of the basic estimate and a shorter Key Judgments section. Both will be coordinated by the Agency representatives. When published, the first volume of the NIE will contain only the Key Judgments. Volume I should be no more than 10 printed pages in length. The basic estimate will be published as back-up analysis in an accompanying Volume II. There will, of course, be occasions where the length or complexity of the estimate will necessitate variations on this concept.

Coordination: When the Chairman has a satisfactory draft, he will distribute it to the representatives. The latter will be given 2 weeks to consult with their respective Principals on the content of a draft before the representatives meet for coordination with the paper's Chairman. The representatives will meet on consecutive working days for as long as necessary to complete coordination. Discussion at these meetings will center on ironing out questions of fact, examining the principal assessments of the given paper, and identifying main areas of agreement or disagreement/dissent. If major revisions are necessary, there can be a clean-up meeting to review the final text; new issues will not be raised at clean-up meetings. Any major issues not resolved at representatives' meetings will be examined at NFIB by the DCI and the Principals.

NFIB Consideration: Volume I as coordinated by the representatives (that is, Key Judgments, together with any dissents or unresolved issues) will go to the DCI for approval and distribution to the Principals, who will be given at least 7 working days to review the final draft. It will be scheduled for the next regular meeting of NFIB thereafter. At NFIB, discussion will center on the estimate's major questions, with any necessary editorial or minor fixes to be done subsequently under the direction of Chairman, NIC and the paper's Chairman, as directed at NFIB by the DCI. The Chairman will also be responsible for conforming a coordinated Volume II to Volume I. Volume II will be published within one month after Volume I.

Category II (periodic) NIE Procedures

The procedures outlined above for Category I NIEs in general apply also to Category II. These papers are likely to be longer (sometimes more than two volumes) and more complex than those in Category I, and arrangements for

their production may involve an elaborate structure of working groups and subgroups, DCI Committees, etc. They will also take more time to prepare. Nonetheless, every effort will be made to move them along expeditiously, and to keep Volume I concise and policy-oriented. Present production of periodic NIEs should not be significantly changed under these procedures.

Interagency Intelligence Memoranda (IIM)

The IIM will be prepared in accordance with SNIE or NIE procedures as appropriate to the issue addressed, except that it will be coordinated in the Community at the NFIB representatives level and issued by the Chairman, NIC. Representatives may, of course, seek the approval of their Principals. An IIM may be referred to NFIB and issued by the DCI if he so decides, or if requested by a NFIB Principal.

General

These procedures should provide a maximum of one week for the production of Category A SNIE's, three weeks for Category B SNIE's, and three to four months for the production of Volume I of Category I and most Category II NIE's. Principals will, of course, retain their right of dissent in all cases and categories of estimates, including IIM's.

After NFIB discussion of an SNIE or NIE, the estimate Chairman will convene the representatives for a review of and follow-up to the NFIB proceedings. This meeting should also focus on identifying gaps in collection or analysis for future emphasis. The Chairman will be responsible for initiating further action through appropriate channels to fill such gaps.

These procedures may be abridged by C/NIC when an estimate is needed more quickly than they will permit. The only essential conditions are that each agency have an opportunity to dissent, and that the DCI approve the final product.